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The
Singing Crow



THE SINGING CROW

The
SINGING CROW
and
OTHER POEMS

By
NATHALIA CRANE

Illustrated by
MAC HARSHBERGER



New York
ALBERT & CHARLES BONI
1926

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CONTENTS

THE ONE-WORD SCROLL	17
THE WITNESSES	18
THE SINGING CROW	19
"THE FORMS OF POETRY"	30
SPOOKS	33
THE ADVISERS	35
THE RADIO	38
BALLAD OF VALLEY FORGE	39
THE CAVERN	42
THE MAKING OF A WORLD	43
THE HAPPY LAND	44
DESIRE	45
THE COCKLE SHELL	46
THE STYLISTS	47
MAY DAY	50
THE STUDIO	52
THE HYAENA	53
THE PRAYER	54
OFF FLAMBOROUGH HEAD	55
STATIC	56
ALLIANCES	58
FIRST CAUSE	59
PHYLLIS	60



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CONTENTS

THE GOD OF THE CHILDREN	61
A SINGER GONE	62
FANTASY LANE	64
THE DUST	65
THE FIRST INFORMER	66
LANCE AND FIRE	68
THE BIRTHDAY	69
WHO ART THOU?	70
THE DRAGONS OF KOMODO	71
THE COLORS	72
THE ROSE IS RED	73
THE CUP BEARERS	74
THE SEA LAWYER	75
THE SLOGAN	76
SPRING REVERIES	77
SANCTUARY	78
THE REVOLT	79
THE TORNADO	80
THE AMBUSCADE	81
RECONNAISSANCE	82
EXPERIMENTS	83
THE SECOND DAY	84
THE SEVENTH DAY	85





ILLUSTRATIONS

THE SINGING CROW	<i>Frontispiece</i>
THE ONE-WORD SCROLL	λVI
“AN INDIAN BOY”	2I
SPOOKS	3I



To
VIRGINIA MOORE
POET AND FRIEND



THE WITNESSES

Lo and behold,
Lo God made this starry wold,
The maggot and the mold—
Lo and behold.

He taught the grass
Contentment, blade by blade;
The sanctity
Of sameness in a shade.

He did ordain
The odor of the fern;
The cataract
Achieved unto the churn.

Forth from the clay
There trooped the colored ware;
The vines devised
A baby's swinging chair.

The oak tree gave
Its gauntlets for a wheel;
A ladle rose
From out the mixer's meal.

Came Usage down
The balustraded rifts,
Her debts forgot
But swollen with the gifts.

There yet remain
Those verities of old
To testify—
The maggot and the mold.

THE SINGING CROW

AN Indian boy with hazel bow
Oncedrew upon a sentry crow.

The arrow's ire a breast did seek,
It missed but tore away the beak.

The wounded bird lived on to be
The outcast of a rookery.

In swampland straw for days he lay
And wore the bandage of the clay.

The sedges guarded his retreat;
He found a berry he could eat.

At last his mind he tried to fix
On themes beyond a cicatrix.

One night he gave upon the straw
A cry he thought to be a caw.

The rabbit jumping paused in air,
A fox crouched down with furrowed stare.

The doe beside a brook resort
Half spilled her second twilight draught;

For from a marge where grasses slant
There came the throbbing of the chant.

The first bar dulced the cardinal's own,
The second cost the thrush a throne.

"Our does are pensive by the lakes;
"The stags talk keyboard in the brakes;

"The butterflies forget their routes,
"The humming birds put on the mutes;

"And where our heron stands to knee
"No ripple breaks his reverie."

For such a boast a bog could swing—
It touched the ethics of the wing.

'Twas then that rumor raised the horn;
The crows sent couriers at morn.

"Oh, tell us true what singing ghost
"Has made our simple marshland boast.

"You talk of gods who drone the chant;
"Mayhap 'tis but a mating brant.

"You talk of keyboards in a swale—
"Some reed-bird, not a nightingale.

"Your myths and birds so tangled seem,
"We must revise this marshland dream.

"And just to show that you are wrong,
"We'll sit at dusk to hear the song."

At eve they flocked, the lords in black,
To show wherein a chant may lack.

In squadrons down the dark they whirled;
In vantage trees their wings they furled.

“As if some soul by sorrow torn
“Could look no more upon the corn.

“He names our hopes and lists our woes—
“Therein he lacks the pride of crows.

“So much for word; now as to note—
“There was a belfry in that throat.

“Oh, never bird so swung the bar
“Or eased an idyl from a star.

“No bird would from the treble flee
“To glorify a lower key.

“No bird would put aside the trill
“To hold the time beat in the bill.

“He has the drag line of the snail—
“The downrush of the nightingale.

“And if for beak were such renown,
“Our scorers would have staffed it down,

“That in one roost there still might be
“A showcase for such artistry.

“But this is true, and well we know,
“It lies beyond the *living* crow.

“We dare not chance opinion wrong;
“We cannot tell from whence this song.

“We judge from beak to feather tip,
“But not the sonnet from the lip.”

A hush, and then began the din,
The cheering when the marshlands win.

The ferns led off with triple "Rah,"
The rushes gave the full Huzzah.

The night hawk screamed, the antlers belled
The little foxes haunched and yelled.

The tern, the heron and the doe
Were looking for a horn to blow;

The scrub oaks roared, the cattails clicked,
The bumble bees lay down and kicked.



The lords departed—all but one,
In glossy habit of the nun.

A daughter of the Hood was she,
First damsel in a rookery.

It was her ear that caught a flaw—
The transmutation of the caw.

And swift o'er borne by tender needs
She fluttered down into the reeds.

By darkness buoyed she toned her plaint
To match the venture of a saint.

She dimly knew celestial things,
How armless angels use the wings;

At dawn they climbed an azure height
And close together passed from sight.



“THE FORMS OF POETRY”

“THE Forms of Poetry” by Untermeyer;
Olympus in a ladle on the fire.

He summons wizards from their old resorts;
Red robed they come with armfuls of retorts,

They pluck the forge and anvil from their sleeves,
Shake down enchanted charcoal from the eves.

Into a skillet, one by one they pour
The ceremonial powders of their lore.

Two gnomes appear with necromantic ware—
A first-line balance and an end-line flare.

The bellows roars, the dwarfs the embers trim,
Forth comes the cup that never had a rim;

The flask of oil marked to anoint the mole,
The wings the tortoise spreads within his soul.

The golden ropes they rigged in Homer's town,
The Lesbian surge, the sway of Dante's gown.

The wizards stir the formulas afire,
Out of the ladle steps the seven-stringed lyre.



SPOOKS



SPOOKS

OH, I went down to Framingham
To sit on a graveyard wall;
"If there be spooks," I said to myself,
"I shall see them, one and all."

I hugged the knee to still the heart,
My gaze on a tomb 'neath a tree.
Down in the village the clock struck nine
But never a ghost did I see.

A boy passed by and his hair was red,
He paused by a sunken mound.
"How goes it with all the ghosts," said he,
"Have you heard any walking around?"

Now the taunt was the sign of a boy's disdain
For the study I did pursue.
So I took the hour to teach that lad
Of the things unseen but true.

I talked of howlet, banshee, ghoul
The gristly and the lean,
I sat on that graveyard wall and told
Of the things I had never seen.

And suddenly a bat swung by
Two cats began to bawl,
And that red-haired boy walked off in haste
When I needed him most of all.

I lost a slipper as I fled—
I bumped against a post,
But nevertheless I knew I'd won
The secret of raising a ghost.

And the method is this—at least for a miss,
You must sit on a graveyard wall,
And talk of the things you never have seen
And you'll see them, one and all.

THE ADVISERS

ONCE on a day Griselda—
She of the narrow shin—
Taunted that younger damsel,
Even Madedda Ginn.

This was the way she ranted:
"Shame on yourself, and fie,
Romping with russet satyrs,
You, with the odd-shaped eye.

"Under the moon I saw you
Down where the rattans wave;
Mayhap you want instruction,
Gift of a goat-foot knave.

"Ever the glance of Phryne
Carries the quester's gleam;
Ever a Sappho's pulses
Shout for the old régime."

Up rose that younger damsel,
Red to the dulcet chin;
Suddenly, someone calling,
Chanted "Madedda Ginn."

Turned she unto the thickets,
Traversed a tussocked cleft,
Came to the oldest parrot
Counting the feathers left.

There, mid the topaz grasses
Told of Griselda's tongue;
Answered that painted Plato
Pacing a bamboo rung.

"I am a gay adviser,
All of a hundred eleven;
I was a great grandfather
Ere I was half of seven.

"Many the wars I've witnessed,
Sprung by a narrow stave;
Fluff—till the trees sank downward
Under the plumes we gave.

"Tush, for the dry Griseldas
Juggling a mouldy feud;
We want the sway of palm trees
Launching the latest brood.

"Love and the rites it sentries
Only the vexed condemn;
There are the lower branches—
There is the goblin stem.

"Often a meagre leafage
Covers the mellow things,
Vermin have linked with ermine,
Mice with the golden wings.

"Gray is the eye of adder
Gold is the eye of toad;
Somewhere there rests a reason,
Somewhere a royal code.

“Grieve not because Griselda
Stands for the narrow shin;
I put my faith in candour,
Also Madedda Ginn.”



THE RADIO

THERE is a sender on a rock
Listed as "B.—Gibral;"
Counting the Congo cable dead,
This is the relay call.

Taking the leap of Spring Heel Jack
Over the old Alham,
Bidding the Pyrenees stand aside—
'Way for a radiogram.

Bearing the word of Afric storm—
Naming the galleys down,
This is the flash of Spring Heel Jack,
"A. P. to London Town."

BALLAD OF VALLEY FORGE

I WAS born at Valley Forge—Valley Forge,
In a powder cart they captured from King
George;
Oh, it stood hub-deep in snow at the end of
Cannon Row,
I was born a winter's night at Valley Forge.

Mother lived in Philadel—Philadel,
But the British thought she counted guns too
well.
They were not at all quite sure but ordered her
on tour,
They led us to a gate and said: "Farewell."

We were hungry, we were weary, we were cold
When we reached the lane that leads to Aaron's
Fold;
There we gave the double sigh as we went march-
ing by
With not a single drummer for the bold.

We had turned the back on George—Old King
George;
We had traded for the hillock and the gorge.
It was dark and snowing hard when we stumbled
on a guard—
"Who goes there?" he bawled to us at Valley
Forge.

He was dressed in buff and blue—buff and blue,
Of a regiment that bandages the shoe;
On his cross belts we could see “Rhode Island
Infantry,”
In his old chapeau a grim cockade we knew.

’Twas the outpost, Number Nine, Number Nine,
And he passed the word along the sentry line:
“Here’s a maid from Philadel, and she don’t seem
over well,
“Tell Headquarters that she needs the counter-
sign.”

Mother fell upon the snow—on the snow,
By a powder cart that stood in Cannon Row;
Said that sentry Number Nine, “The word is
Brandywine,
“And it’s lucky that our ammunition’s low.”

Gen’ral Washington himself came down the road
To that little red-wheeled wagon, our abode;
And he ordered heavy fire fearing mother might
expire.
From a case the countersign he did unload.

Then he gave a soldier’s sigh, soldier’s sigh,
When the army doctor said we would not die;
And he added: “Mighty Lord, Valley Forge can
set the board
“If a lady deigns to stop in passing by.”

At the dawn they moved us down to High Com-
mand,
And my mother got a ruffle from the band,
For it seems that after all there were code marks
in her shawl
Only Generals of Division understand.

I was christened in the old Headquarters room;
Baron Steuben held the font and wore a plume.
And to vex that old King George they named me
Valley Forge,
The name that makes the cannon long to boom.

I was born at Valley Forge—Valley Forge,
In a powder cart they captured from King George;
Oh, it stood hub deep in snow at the end of Can-
non Row,
I was born a winter's night at Valley Forge.



THE CAVERN

THERE was the cup and the candlestick,
There was the play-sword blade,
Waiting to take the witness stand,
Proving a child's crusade.

THE MAKING OF A WORLD

UP FROM the precincts of the primal brew
There swam a painted bubble into view;
Its sides were sheened by tidal rise and fall—
It seemed a rainbow wound into a ball.
'Twas thus was made the first of all settees—
A tussocked bench that tilted to the seas.
A geyser swayed and strewn an irised sap,
The fern advanced from out the marshland's lap.

THE HAPPY LAND

ALL the flowers are learned
All the bees are wise,
Tortoises with pinions,
Moles with sapphire eyes.

Peacocks there are poets
Equal to their tails;
Hermit crabs usurp not
Shelters of the snails.

Everyone is happy
Even mastodons,
Just because a planet
Dropped comparisons.

DESIRE

OH, I would like to be a ghoul
And ruffle the poet's mound;
To dig up the rhymes he laid aside
For the sake of another sound.

And otherwise, if that were vain
A diver I would be,
To pick up the rings the doges drop
Whenever they marry the sea.



THE COCKLE SHELL

THEY gave of their gold and ebony
To build her a cargo junk;
It went aground on the Sow and Pigs
That lie off Huppy Hunk.

She fashioned a craft of another style,
She timbered the peanut shell;
And there was the rig of the three-stick brig
And the roll of the caravel.

The freeboard was painted a sea-foam white
The strakes were of emerald green;
It carried the lure of the miniature—
'Twas little but could be seen.

And the sea it said when it finally woke
There was never a craft so brave;
It looks like a mite and yet it is tight;
I could sink it with one small wave.

But what is the use of a salty abuse
Or running a hurricane gale;
The duties of seas are to wreck grandees,
Not dousing a cockle-shell rail.

THE STYLISTS

IT WAS a terraced garden dim,
The Seraph with the sword
Had pasted up a bulletin—
A writ upon a board.

And we—the scraps of cavern trash—
The big-ear and the paw,
We strained our brains to understand
The suddenness of Law.

Oh, presently the Seraph waved
His very jaunty blade,
And down the jealous stepping stones
Came fashion's first parade.

Here they come! Here they come!
Adam and Eve, Aha!
First of all the stylists worth
The double-lead buzzab.

Such abbreviation
And such a valid air;
Then we saw divinity—
And coming down the stair.

We caught it in an instant,
The deftness of the frond;
We knew a million leaves in tucks
Could never go beyond.

We cheered them down the terraces
We cheered them up the vale,
The talon roared for reefers green,
The big-ear wound the tail.

The roses undid ev'rything
Except a petal gird,
And down to one last feather stripped
The gritty humming bird.

The lion sheared his tawny hair
But left a belly band;
The tiger 'round his haunches draped
A grassy halo grand.

The elephant and buffalo
Descended to the pools
And there they painted yellow clouts
According to the rules.

Thro' gateways crêped we still may view
The glades unroughed by share,
But well we ken the emptiness—
Our stylists are not there.

And gone the olden brevities,
The easy roundabout;
The hummingbird has lost his grit,
The lion will not shout:

Here they come! Here they come!
Adam and Eve, Aha!
First of all the stylists worth
The double-lead huzzah.

*First of all the famous
To take unto the leaf,
First of all authorities
To celebrate the brief.*



MAY DAY

WE HAVE called for the youngest conscripts
With never a thought of a fray,
But simply the storming of springtime
And taking the first day of May.

We have summoned the flathouse frontiers,
The castles that Adelis knew;
And Featherbed Lane is recruiting
To send in a squadron or two.

We are counting upon a roll call—
The longest that ever could be,
The heels of a rear guard preceding
The van of our own infantry.

No thunder shall ever dismay us;
A raincoat brigade cannot drown;
We shall capture the parks and the pastures
That lie on the edge of the town.

And some of the marchers may wonder,
And some of the banners may lag,
But we halt ev'ry block in the army
When a five-year-old carries a flag.

With trumpets that never have sounded,
With drummers who once were distrait,
We shall take all the bastions by rushes—
Arriving in pomp at a gate.

No muskets or cannon are needed,
For always the towers go down
At the hint of a cheer for a pasture
That lies on the edge of the town.



THE STUDIO

I STRAYED where light and shadow
Their miracles bestow—
I walked the walls of wonder
In Bachrach's studio.

And there I met my playmates
The midgets of the rune,
The goose girl from the story
And lovely Lorna Doone.

I heard the sound of music
The cherubs chanting low,
I saw the brooding cupids
Of Michael Angelo.

Oh, there were high chair monarchs
Dispensing ecstasies;
And there were meek Godivas
With muffs upon their knees.

They gave no word of parting
But as I turned to go,
Each picture made obeisance
In Bachrach's studio.

THE HYAENA

THE hyaena limps on his left hind leg,
The hyrax—it has no tail;
The white bee no sting, the tortoise no wing,
No chimney the house of the snail.

The hyaena limps on his left hind leg,
He has done it these ten thousand years.
With a laugh all his own, half gurgle, half groan
And an eye on the Freudian seers.

The hyaena limps on his left hind leg,
He sidles because of a strain
Involving the crimp in the hyaena's limp
That the Freudians can never explain.

The hyaena limps on his left hind leg;
The eyeball still sleeps in the mole,
But back of the beast is standing his priest—
The symbol that sanctions each rôle.



THE PRAYER

OH, GOD in Heaven, give to us
The faith to eye the waste;
The courage of the copy shears,
The patience of the paste.

OFF FLAMBOROUGH HEAD

September 23, 1779

'TIS John Paul Jones on the quarter deck
And the Bon Homme going lame;
'Tis John Paul Jones and the larboard ports
Playing the shut-eye game.



STATIC

IN STRIVING for a concert,
The program of the Mall,
I stumbled on a station
That never had a call.

There tripped from out the turquoise
A naked little slur;
A green cascade it straddled
And landed with a whir.

As Monte Cristos listen
For guns of old châteaux;
As Joans kneel to voices
In sheepfold patios;

'Twas thus I held that station,
The lost at last was found—
The secret of the static,
The incidental sound.

I heard the hissing arrows
They loosed at Marathon;
The scuffling of the sandals
That riled the Rubicon.

There came an auburn whisper,
Elois to Abelard;
I heard Napoleon saying
His farewell to The Guard.

Thereafter in procession
The roll that sank The George,
A boastful damsel singing:
"I was born at Valley Forge."

The squeaking of a tackle,
The Bon Homme's cannonade,
A lull, and then a story—
It was Scheherezade.

Oh, never such a broadcast
Since Dante walked the vale;
I heard John Bunyan praying
Alone in Bedford Jail;

Parepa Rosa chanting,
Oh, come and listen in
And hear the catgut snapping—
A one-string violin.



ALLIANCES

THE little *and*, the tiny *if*,
The ardent *ahs* and *ohs*,
They haunt the lanes of poesy,
The boulevards of prose.

Small primpers of the passages
With very slender limbs,
And yet they make alliances
With lordly paradigms.

FIRST CAUSE

THE ritual and the microtome
Went down to the primal pit;
They sat on the edge and gobbled there
Over the pristine *It*.

They mocked that lanterned orifice,
But thoughtful, rubbed the chin
When a bubble bobbed from a lava bed
And graciously called them *kin*.



PHYLLIS

OFTEN we speak of Phyllis,
Often we say: Ah, yes,
Once she was very little,
Sporting the one-year dress.

Hopping, skipping and jumping,
Lud, how the days do pass;
Soon she'll be donning bonnets—
Daunting the primer class.

Parchments will Ph.D. her
Sheepskins will call her kin;
Then she'll be daunting Wellesley,
Vassar or mayhap Bryn.

THE GOD OF THE CHILDREN

THE God of the Children was angry—
He was hearing too much about schools;
So he called on the doctors of learning
And asked for a showdown on rules.

The mortar-board stiffened its tassel,
The gown showed a kinship to fire;
To think that despite all the scholars
A god could so stoop to conspire.

But the God of the Children was stubborn—
He gave them the full of the board;
There were words that no deity utters,
The chancellors even were awed.

"I am God of a trillion planets
"With spaces as yet to ray,
"But I never keep little knees shaking
"Till even the chalk swoons away.

"When I planted the palms to please you
"We never had schools in the fens
"With half of the benches in twitches
"And half of them toggled with the lens.

"I advise you to cut down your schedules
"And lower the two-session bar,
"Or presently angels may whisper
"A renegade governs *that* star."

EPILOGUE

A SINGER GONE

A SINGER gone, the marshes lack;
The rooks have lost a ward in black.

They cannot harmonize their woes,
That boasting lowland and the crows.

The bogs, dilating, hold their own—
The songs were meant for them alone.

A mention fanciful, of maize
Was incidental to the lays.

In after years their legend ran:
"We had a chanter from the van.

"Whene'er he hummed our alders knelt,
"The chills struck through the turtle's pelt;

"The adder lost his power to coil;
"From pallid sand dune oozed an oil;

"The fauns broke from the double hem,
"Each rose tugged madly at her stem.

"Alas! Alack! he sings no more.
"We think he went to Southern Shore."



The lords in black, they have their tale.
"Our god was chanting in a vale,

"Of fields where grew amazing corn
"That husked itself to tease the morn.

"We could not see his garb or face—
"The shadows held us from that grace.

"But in our ears he poured the sup,
"The juice of maize from rimless cup.

"Our daughter, fairest of the black,
"Did vanish when we turned the back.

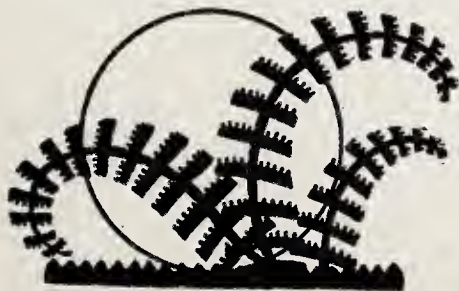
"So bowed were we, so wonder pent,
"We did not notice where she went.

"We have a pride above the rod;
"We think she went to serve our god."

The lords in black are not aware
That wounds are matrons made to bear.

That in the midmost of the blight
The pinion girds itself for flight.

But this they know—that council boards
That sit with gods may lose their wards.



FANTASY LANE

COMETH a competent one with a flare,
Stirring the embers and easing a chair.

Sudden the orchestra draweth a strain;
Up goes the curtain in Fantasy Lane.

Was it in Erminie, Penzance or Wang?
Surely I'm hearing the songs that she sang.

There's Fanny Herring—Jack Shepard of yore;
Menken is playing Mazeppa once more.

Footlights may flicker and yet all is plain—
I'm with the old ones in Fantasy Lane.

THE DUST

L AID out in atoms of amber and rust—
Surely an angel arranges the dust.

Under the microscope all seems sincere;
There is a hillside, a valley, a weir.

There are diameters posing as fens,
There are the Apennines—under the lens.

Spread on a slide is the great Gobi Plain;
Carthage and Nineveh rise from a stain.

Laid out in atoms of amber and rust,
Surely an angel arranges the dust.



THE FIRST INFORMER

OH MIRTH, for all your drolleries
How dangerous you are!
Behind your shaking belly hides
The shackle and the bar.

.

When Eve awoke one sultry dawn
And heard a parrot laugh,
She turned to Adam languidly
And spoke this paragraph:

Oh, I can stand a deal of things
And still evade the swoon,
But here's a jester loud enough
To notify the Moon.

Then Adam did rebuke the birds
And spared not one at all.
That night the angry parrot spread
The tale o'er Heaven's wall.

And after that the flaming sword,
And after that a stroll.
But Heaven hates a spy with wings
And cut the parrot's rôle.

No longer may he testify
To all that he has seen,
Or run an observation post
Above a dented green.

In brazen chains he struts a rung,
A sentry under spell;
"Turn out the Guard," his chosen cry—
He did it once too well.

And he must never laugh at Eve—
This penance on a bar;
Oh, Mirth for all your drolleries
How dangerous you are.



LANCE AND FIRE

NATURE, for pastime, doth a coast bewitch,
Squeezes a promontory to a niche;
Puts in a tenant longing to be free,
Who straightway turns into an absentee.

THE BIRTHDAY

TO JULIE BRIDWELL

JULIE had a birthday,
Mother made acclaim;
Seven soulful candles
Waved their flags of flame.

Ferryboats were tooting,
Trying to be sweet;
Sets of verses scooted
Down from Henry Street.

Ev'ry place was happy—
Even New York Bay;
Sea Gulls flew in sevens,
Honoring the day.



WHO ART THOU?

THE cactus came, a torrid maid at dawn,
She bore a comb, the prickle and the thorn;
The plants presumed to tendencies of power
And planned for her the dowry of an hour.

THE DRAGONS OF KOMODO

THE dragons of Komodo
Have left their gorgeous isles
To vindicate a guidon—
No wonder China smiles.

From golden brown volcanos
Escorted by the mists,
These saurians have sauntered
To please the scientists.

If tiny isles can hatch them
We'd best beware the past;
A leaf, turned prehistoric,
May flatten us at last.

Upon a mattress in a bean
There romps a paragon;
We over-turn the sea shell,
Out trots the mastodon.

The caterpillar's boasting
His anaconda stock;
The parrot's glances broadcast
The Griffin and the Roc.

And there are other wonders
For eyes that know the sand,
A Malay island waiting
To take us by the hand.

THE COLORS

YOU cannot choose your battlefield,
The gods do that for you,
But you can plant a standard
Where a standard never flew.



THE ROSE IS RED

THE rose is red,
You wonder why?
The rose is red
From some strange dye.

No molecule
Or atom's brain
Achieved the candour
Of that stain.

Electrons never
Tinged that dew,
Or drained the ruby
For a hue.

But in some wan
Hegira's morn,
An angel leaned
Against a thorn.



THE CUP BEARERS

TO MARJORIE JOHNSON

WE ARE the cup bearers
Serving the ink;
Kneeling to offer you
Scriptural drink.

We have served dignity
Half thimble sips;
We have served thirsty ones
Wreathing the dips.

Some drank not tarrying,
Others with sighs;
Over the cup-rim
We're watching your eyes.

THE SEA LAWYER

FOR juries he makes paper models
Exactly as sinkings may be;
From a pitcher he pours out the surges
To show them the weight of a sea.

Oh, never so skillful a pleader
In cases where waves overlap;
Some day they may bar illustrations
But juries will never like that.



THE SLOGAN

ONCE on a time was a city
Went into the market and bought
A slogan that wasn't a slogan
But only a trader's thought.

Once on a time was a city
That sought for a symbol from Thrace
While the Bugle of Balaklava
Lay in dust in Lincoln Place.

Now what of a wonderful city
And a chamber of commerce benign,
With a trumpet so famous and handy
In leading a glamorous line.

But the bugle of Balaklava
Was left on a Brooklyn shelf,
While a city hunted for slogans
And bought and was proud of itself.

SPRING REVERIES

THE robin's breast is robed in red,
The robin's eggs are blue;
The briar boasts a blossoming
As colorless as dew.

The rainbow rims a cataract,
The moonlight marks the rose;
And deep within the boulder grim
The little garnet glows.

But to the black browed bumble bee
There haps the strangest thing;
A white capped cupid bee is born
With never any sting.

Quatrains and Couplets from
THE SUNKEN GARDEN

SANCTUARY

IT WAS a home
Roofed by a cavern dome;
For lighting scheme—
The braziers of a dream.

The walls were rayed
With jasper and with jade;
The sandy floor
Was whiter than the shore.

There was a wheel
Full-fashed without the steel;
A daised space
With lattices like lace.

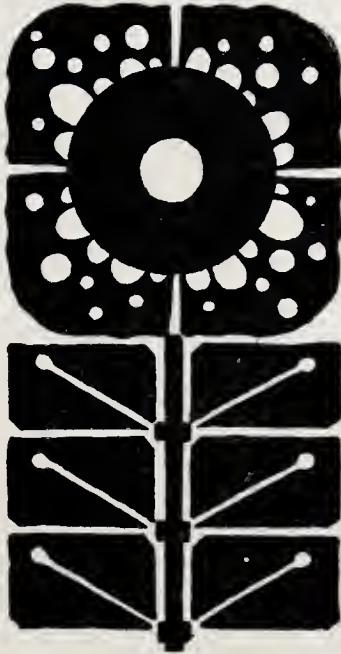
And to that manse
Set in a rocky stance,
There came to stay
The brown eyes and the gray.

THE REVOLT

THE stars in the Grand Central Station
Are going the way of the pale;
The obelisk, gray in the parkway,
Is reaching the point of a wail.

The peacock has turned in his colors,
In whiteness he walks in the Zoo;
The drawbridge on Governor's Island
Has joined the mutiny crew.

The Palisades once more are with us,
They openly practice a sag;
No longer they cry: "Stand From Under!"
At the sight of the dynamite flag.



THE TORNADO

LONG ago 'twas Lilith
Charted Eden's metes;
Catalogued the glories,
Tally-checked the sweets,

Chid the bower breezes
Wherefore all the haste?
Chid the spendthrift fountains—
Wherefore all the waste?

Simplified the bird trills,
Timed a bantling's tears;
Vased the rose-bud's odor,
Sent it down the years.

THE AMBUSCADE

BEWARE the sloughs that ancient tricks
repeat—

The sloven fen, where sits an old deceit;
For 'neath a lotus or a padded ling
The python's head prepares the fatal spring.



RECONNAISSANCE

THE fire-tail's egg is fettered by a hue,
The turquoise tints an oval all its own;
But in the misty model of the tear
There rests a mandate from another zone.

EXPERIMENTS

THERE is a weird for every empty shell,
A hant resides where once the orchid fell;
And in collapsing chancels of the mole,
A shambling ghost still plays his eyeless rôle.



THE SECOND DAY

OR EVER the arts of an olden day
Had painted the screens of joy,
There came to sit on a sun-burned crag
The rôle of the shepherd boy.

THE SEVENTH DAY

OH, FOR a cup, filled by a buskined bee
With melted scepters of serenity;
Touched with the odors of the elder-rose,
Brimmed with the drippings of a lost repose.



